CLAIMS

1. A nerve locator which comprises:

a current source;

a first electrode connected to the current source and attached to a patient;

a second electrode connected to the current source and having a conductive surface; and

means for attaching the second electrode to a finger of a clinician such that the conductive surface is in contact with the patient when the clinician uses the finger to palpate the patient;

wherein current pulses are applied to the patient through the second electrode as the clinician palpates the patient in search of the nerve.

2. The nerve locator as recited in claim 1 in which the means for attachment is an adhesive membrane disposed between the second electrode and the finger of the clinician.

3. The nerve locator as recited in claim 1 in which the means for attachment is an adhesive membrane disposed between the second electrode and a glove which surrounds the finger of the clinician.

4. The nerve locator as recited in claim 1 in which the means for attachment is a glove which supports the second electrode and which surrounds the finger of the clinician.

5. The nerve locator as recited in claim 1 in which the conductive surface has an area substantially that of a 9 millimeter circle.

6. A method for anesthetizing a nerve in a subject, the steps comprising:

a) placing an electrode on the finger of a nondominant hand of the clinician;

b) palpating the subject with the finger of the nondominant hand of the clinician to locate structures in the vicinity of the nerve;

c) applying current pulses to the subject through the electrode to locate the nerve by stimulating the nerve; and

d) injecting an anesthetic into the subject using the dominant hand of the clinician.

7. An electrode for electrically stimulating a nerve in a subject, which comprises:

a conductive layer having a conductive surface;

a lead for electrically connecting the conductive layer to a source of current pulses; and

means for attaching the conductive layer to the distal finger pad of an examining clinician to enable the conductive surface to be brought into contact with the skin of the subject.

8. The nerve locator as recited in claim 7 in which the means for attachment is an adhesive membrane disposed between the conductive layer electrode and a glove which surrounds the finger of the clinician.

9. The nerve locator as recited in claim 7 in which the means for attachment is a glove which supports the conductive layer and which surrounds the finger of the clinician.